



Shawnee Successes

Quarterly Newsletter



A quarterly newsletter for employees and friends of the Shawnee National Forest

Wow! What an incredible start the Shawnee has seen with the arrival of spring and summer... Yes, from hands on, engaging outreach events that had participants of all ages trekking to the outdoors for guided hikes, nature themed games, canoe trips, campfire programs and more, to members of the Shawnee Volunteer Corps taking to the trails in an effort to prepare pathways through lush, green foliage for the busy recreational season ahead, it's been a vibrant spring and summer for the team thus far in being able to reach out and connect with the public we serve through our volunteer and conservation education programs. **All total, we've been able to deliver over 25 programs that encompassed over 5,800 attendees, and we look forward to continued outreach endeavors!** There is truly no greater satisfaction than the smile on a child's face as he or she catches their first fish, seeing a family enjoy bird watching together or simply readying facilities for usage, knowing how many family and friends will gather to rest, relax and simply enjoy nature at one of our sites during the months ahead. We're grateful to be a cornerstone for southern Illinois and to be of service to the communities in the region.

As we continue with our theme of outreach, this issue of *Shawnee Successes* focuses on such efforts, whether it be highlighting some of our many conservation education programs or providing information on our most recent volunteer achievements. We also highlight improvements that have been made around the Forest to some of our facilities and programs so that you can see how we're thinking ahead, seeking to make your visit (whether your first or one of many prior) with us even better than before. And, you might just find an interesting tidbit or two of other information tucked away in the pages of this latest edition. That being said, we hope you will enjoy and share with your family, friends and colleagues and that you'll also make plans to come and visit the Forest too before summer's end as we'd love to see you!

Many thanks,

Amanda G. Patrick
Public Affairs Officer



Volunteers work to assist with the Illinois Iron Furnace Project, whether in the field or helping to craft two landscape quilts for the community where the descendants of those from the Iron Furnace now live. Learn more about the project on the last page of the newsletter.

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Shawnee National Forest Helps Foster a Connection to Nature Through a Multitude of Outdoor Events

With warmer weather abounding, and a myriad of blooms and blossoms with the arrival of spring, the Shawnee National Forest kicked off the season by welcoming visitors to a variety of events in an effort to help connect people of all ages with nature during April, May and June. And with various themes and focuses, there was something truly for everyone too!

In April, three main outreach endeavors were held with the first offering participants guided field trips to see unique birds, wildflowers, reptiles, aquatic life, geological features, plant communities and more in the world-renowned LaRue-Pine Hills Research Natural Area during the annual LaRue-Pine Hills Appreciation Day. On Saturday, April 21st, the outdoor focused fun continued as birding was the topic at hand as the Shawnee assisted the Middle Mississippi River Partnership in ensuring a successful "Birding the Bottomlands" day. During the day-long event, ten birding locations were staffed by expert birders while an additional two sites offered canoe birding adventures. In the afternoon, a birding themed festival was held, featuring many conservation related education and demonstration activities. Culminating with the end of the month, the final April outreach occasion was the Forest's involvement as a key partner in Stewardship Week; a week-long outreach experience that allows hundreds of children from area schools to come out and enjoy learning about what it means to be a good steward of the earth and the great outdoors.

The Forest also launched its Young Trekkers series in April by inviting kids (1st through 5th) grades to join after school adventures at Lincoln Memorial Picnic Grounds in Jonesboro. Each day included different activities, such as hiking and park exploration based on a myriad of different natural resource themes.

June included the Lake Glendale and Glen O. Jones Fishing Derbies, the Forest's annual two week aquatic education adventure known as Fish Tales, and ArborWILD! (offering a variety of hands on, conservation education focused stations). June 9th, the date for both fishing derbies, was also a chance for visitors to camp for free as fees were waived at all non-concessionaire facilities as part of the Forest's participation in National Get Outdoors (GO) Day.

Campfire programs, guided hikes and more also occurred across the Forest throughout June, providing ample opportunities to explore the Forest and connect with public lands.

To learn more about the Shawnee, including event info, visit the Forest's website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/shawnee>



Students are all smiles as they participate in one of several stations presented by the Shawnee National Forest as part of the annual Stewardship Week event at Dixon Springs Agricultural Center. The U.S. Forest Service, Shawnee National Forest, is honored to be both a major partner and sponsor annually for this worthwhile endeavor, which reaches thousands of area students, providing engaging, hands-on environmental education.

What's New for the Visitor?

Learn more about how the Shawnee is working to improve facilities and programs to ensure a quality experience for those we serve!

- Volunteers have constructed 2,560 feet of new trail on the Den Trail leading to Panther Den Wilderness. AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) volunteers also constructed 2,270 feet of new trail on the River to River Trail in Panther Den Wilderness.
- Ever find yourself at a recreation site or trailhead and in need of information? If so, be on the lookout as the Forest is working to update bulletin board signage along with proposed replacement of older bulletin board structures.
- The Forest continues with updates to our website, seeking to aid you in learning more about the Forest and all your trip planning needs!
- Coming SOON! – Whether you've wanted to share information and photos with family and friends on all that Garden of the Gods has to offer (but live hundreds of miles away with no photos to show) or you're wondering what facilities are at Pounds Hollow, the Forest will soon be able to help answer those questions right from the comfort of your home computer or smartphone as production is underway on a Shawnee National Forest (NF) virtual tour. Featuring our recreation areas across the Forest, the tour will be available by late summer and will be accessible via the Shawnee NF website. Stay tuned for more details!
- The Forest will be replacing the toilets at Cadiz Campground in September with a double concrete vault toilet, enhancing amenities offered to visitors.

Calling ALL volunteers, both current and prospective! – The Shawnee National Forest proudly publishes its own volunteer focused newsletter each quarter, the "Volunteer Vibe." Packed full of news, it's a must read! Check it out online today by visiting the Shawnee NF website: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/shawnee>

In the Shadow of the Illinois Iron Furnace...



Passport in Time (PIT) volunteers make important archaeological discoveries while learning about the lives of furnace workers and their families, and their recent assistance with a project on the Shawnee National Forest (NF) has been vital in making some new discoveries, further linking the present to the past.

From March 27th to the 31st, 2012, 25 PIT volunteers arrived at the Shawnee NF to help the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) relocate activity areas in the hills surrounding the furnace related to the manufacture of iron. The PIT volunteers, working alongside U.S. Forest Service archaeologists and AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) volunteers were able to relocate foundations of houses, iron ore slope mines, and a cemetery; all of which were associated with the furnace operations. They also recorded prehistoric Native American sites in the area, including one that dated to the Late Archaic/Early Woodland period (3000 -1100 B.P.). The PIT event was really an exercise in Archaeological Method and Theory as volunteers learned to use a compass, walk in 15 m transects, shovel test the ridge tops and lower-lying areas, screen the soil using ¼" mesh, bag the artifacts, record the location of the sites using a GPS, and map the new sites. The volunteers were given 1850 census reports, oral histories and newspaper clippings to help bring the Illinois Iron Furnace village to life. With the help of the PIT volunteers, the Forest was able to conduct a full archaeological inventory of about 100 acres in the hills surrounding the furnace! As shovel testing can be exhausting, the team mixed in some fun field trips that included visiting nearby Camp Hicks, a Civilian Conservation Corps camp (1933-1936) and Millstone Bluff, an archaeological site with an interpreted hiking trail.

While some volunteers chose to hike the hills around the Illinois Iron Furnace, others chose to stay inside and reconstruct the furnace village with fabric - and some did both! As part of the Shawnee's Heritage Program "A Stitch in Time," five PIT volunteers and USFS staff pooled their many talents to make not one but two landscape quilts to share with the public and the Elizabethtown community where many of the community's descendants now live. They are a celebration of the history of the Illinois Iron Furnace and those who lived and worked in its shadow.

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To:

Take Note! - Look for future quarterly editions of Shawnee Successes to be found online via the Shawnee National Forest website: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/shawnee>. Those interested in receiving an electronic copy may do so by sending name and email to the following: mailroom_r9_shawnee@fs.fed.us

Did You Know??? → Harrisburg, Illinois, the location of the Shawnee National Forest's Supervisor's Office, was listed as one of the top 35 hunting and fishing towns in the U.S. via Outdoor Life Magazine. In the designation, the town's proximity to the Forest is noted as a reason for the selection: "Though the nearby Shawnee National Forest is best known for its whitetail hunting, the area is also home to turkeys, waterfowl, upland birds, and small game."